The Vampire State | Feeding on Our Fear, Freedom and Finances

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> “But these weren’t the kind of monsters that had tentacles and rotting skin, the kind a seven-year-old might be able to wrap his mind around—they were monsters with

> human faces, in crisp uniforms, marching in lockstep, so banal you don't recognize them for what they are until it's too late."
> Ransom Riggs, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*

Monsters don't always come wrapped in the trappings of horror or myth. Most often, monsters in the real world look like ordinary people. They walk among us. They smile for the cameras. They promise protection and prosperity even as they feed on fear and obedience.

All is not as it seems.

We are living in two worlds.

There's the world we're shown—the bright, propaganda-driven illusion manufactured by the government and its corporate sponsors—and the world we actually inhabit, where economic inequality widens, real agendas are buried beneath layers of Orwellian doublespeak, and "freedom" is rationed out in controlled, legalistic doses by militarized police and federal agents.

We're being fed a series of carefully contrived fictions that bear no resemblance to reality.

Tune out the distractions and diversions, and you run headlong into an unmistakable, unpalatable truth: monsters with human faces walk among us.

Many of them work for the U.S. government.

Through its power grabs, brutality, greed, corruption, and tyranny, the government has become almost indistinguishable from the evil it claims to fight—terrorism, torture, disease, drug trafficking, trafficking of persons, violence, theft, even scientific experimentations that treat humans as test subjects.

With every passing day, it becomes painfully evident that the American Police State has developed its own monstrous alter ego: the Vampire State.

Like its legendary namesake, it survives by draining the lifeblood of the nation—the sweat, money, labor, privacy, and freedoms of “We the People.”

One tax, one law, one war, one surveillance program at a time, it takes what it needs and bleeds us dry.

As in every great horror story, the most terrifying monsters are the ones that look familiar. Of all the gothic figures, Bram Stoker’s vampire—a cold, calculating predator bent on conquest—may be the closest to the waking nightmare unfolding before us.

Like its mythic counterpart, the Vampire State seduces its victims with promises of safety, comfort, and national greatness. Once trust is secured and access granted, it feeds slowly and methodically—just enough to keep the populace docile, but never enough to rouse them from their trance.

Lulled by propaganda and partisan loyalty, the people become what Rod Serling, creator of *The Twilight Zone*, feared most: a zombie-fied mob, mindless to the very monster that feeds on them.

Once it latches on, the Vampire State’s tyrannical hunger only grows.

The Vampire State feeds on fear. Fear is the oxygen of tyranny. Every crisis—real or manufactured—fuels the quest for more power. Serling showed how quickly panic corrodes a community in *The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street*, where neighbors, convinced that danger lurks next door, transform into a violent mob and turn on each other. Our headlines change—drug wars and ICE raids, “domestic extremists” and pandemics, foreign hit lists and necessary military strikes—but the script remains the same: politicians play savior, and a browbeaten populace surrenders their rights for the illusion of safety.

Fear, however, is only the beginning. Once fear takes hold, the next step is to turn people against one another. Demagogues know well how to do this.

The Vampire State feeds on division. In *He’s Alive*, Serling’s young fanatic learns the oldest trick in the book: “The people will follow you if you give them something to

hate." The American Police State has perfected that art—pitting citizen against immigrant, left against right, protester against police, rich against poor—because a divided nation is far easier to control.

Division, in turn, breeds submission. Once a society is at war with itself, obedience becomes the only refuge.

The Vampire State feeds on obedience. In Serling's *The Obsolete Man*, a religious librarian in an atheist society where books are destroyed is condemned to death for obsolescence. The real crime was individuality. Today, bureaucracies demand the same submission—teachers disciplined for dissent, journalists axed for challenging the prevailing order, citizens detained under executive orders for speech deemed "dangerous." Resistance is drained until only compliance remains.

Obedience, however, is never enough. Tyranny requires endless sustenance—material, financial, and human.

The Vampire State feeds on wealth. No predator survives without a steady source of sustenance, and the state's preferred meal is the taxpayer. Endless wars, bloated budgets, emergency powers and corporate concessions keep the machine humming. As in *Judgment Night* and *The Purple Testament*, the war engine consumes bodies and earnings while sanctioning the cost as "patriotism." Trillions get funneled to defense contractors and prison profiteers even as the public is told is "no money" for justice, infrastructure, welfare, or the basic maintenance of a free society.

Yet even that cannot satisfy a regime that wants total control. To control completely, it must know everything about those in its power.

The Vampire State feeds on privacy. A true predator must know its prey. The predatory state now drinks deeply from the digital lifeblood of the nation—every call logged, every movement tracked, every purchase recorded. Palantir-powered surveillance, biometric checkpoints, facial recognition databases: this is Serling's cautionary universe updated for the algorithmic age.

And when fear, division, obedience, wealth, and privacy have been mined to exhaustion, the Vampire State turns to its most precious prey—the human spirit.

The Vampire State feeds on hope. The final hunger is spiritual. It drains its victims of hope until despair is all that's left. A hopeless populace is a controlled one. Serling warned repeatedly that when people lose their moral bearings, they risk becoming the very monsters they fear.

Every horror story reaches a moment when the victims realize what they're up against. Ours has come. The question is how to break the spell.

While Rod Serling warned of what would happen if fear and conformity became our national creed, filmmaker John Carpenter showed what it looks like when that warning is ignored.

Best known for *Halloween*, Carpenter's body of work is infused with a strong anti-authoritarian, anti-establishment concern.

Again and again, he portrays governments at war with their own citizens, technology turned against the public, and a populace too anesthetized to resist tyranny.

In *Escape from New York*, fascism is America's future. In *The Thing*, humanity dissolves into paranoia. In *Christine*, technology turns murderous. In *In the Mouth of Madness*, evil triumphs when people lose "the ability to know the difference between reality and fantasy."

And in *They Live*, Carpenter rips off the mask completely.

Two migrant workers discover that society is controlled by parasitic aliens working in partnership with an oligarchic elite. The people—lulled by comfort, trained by propaganda, hypnotized by screens—serve as hosts for their oppressors.

It is only when homeless drifter John Nada discovers a pair of doctored sunglasses—Hoffman lenses—that Nada sees what lies beneath the elite's fabricated reality: control and bondage.

When viewed through the lens of truth, the elite, who appear human until stripped of their disguises, are shown to be monsters who have enslaved the citizenry in order to

prey on them.

It was fiction—but barely.

The monsters Carpenter envisioned were symbolic; ours wear suits and wave flags.

Americans no longer need special Hoffman lenses to see who is draining us. They're not aliens disguised by human masks; our overlords sit in high offices, issue executive orders, and promise to "save" us while feeding on our fears, labor, and freedoms.

Unless we awaken soon, the Vampire State will finish what both Serling and Carpenter tried to warn us about.

The time for allegory is over; the warning has become the world we live in.

The Vampire State's power depends on darkness—on secrecy, silence, and the willing ignorance of those it drains.

The remedy is not another political savior or bureaucratic fix. It begins where Serling's and Carpenter's parables always began—with the awakening of individual conscience, and the courage to name the real monsters in our midst.

Just as sunlight destroys a vampire, a populace that thinks, questions, and refuses unlawful commands is the surest defense against tyranny.

We cannot fight monsters by becoming them. We cannot defeat evil by imitating its methods.

If the Vampire State thrives on fear, feeds on hate, is empowered by violence, and demands obedience, then our weapon must be courage, our antidote love, our defense nonviolence, and our answer disciplined, creative civil disobedience.

Every generation must relearn these truths.

Almost 250 years after America's founders pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to unseat a tyrant, we find ourselves under the tyrant's thumb again, saddled

with a government that feeds on the fears of the public to expand its power; a bureaucracy that grows fat on the labor of the governed; a surveillance apparatus that gorges on data, privacy, and dissent; and a war machine that sustains itself on endless conflict.

These are the symptoms of a nation that has forgotten its own cure.

The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were meant to serve as stakes through the heart of authoritarian power, but they are not magic incantations.

With every act of blind obedience, every surrendered liberty, every law that elevates the government over the citizenry, our protections diminish.

When that happens, the story turns full circle: fiction becomes prophecy.

In Serling's universe, there was always a narrator to warn us. In Carpenter's, the heroes had to liberate themselves from the monsters' trap.

Our task is both: to see the truth, and to act on it.

As we make clear in *Battlefield America: The War on the American People* and its fictional counterpart *The Erik Blair Diaries*, monsters walk among us—because we have failed to see them for what they truly are.

The Vampire State is real. But so is the power of the human spirit to resist it.

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